(a) whether any survey has been conducted on unemployment in the areas affected by Koshi river in Bihar;

(b) if so, the details thereof;

(c) if not, the reasons therefor;

(d) whether the Government propose to formulate any scheme for providing employment to the people of these areas; and

(e) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI CHANDRADEO PRASAD VARMA) (a) to (c) No, Sir, However, the National Sample Survey Organisation (NSSO) Deptt. of Statistics has conducted various surveys on employment and unemployment throughout the country including Bihar. The last survey conducted on this topic by NSSO was during July, 1993 to June, 1994.

(d) and (e) No special scheme is proposed to be formulated for providing employment to the people of these specific areas. However, various Rural Development Programmes like Integrated Rural Development Programmes, Rural Employment Programmes viz. Jawahar Rozgar Yojana and Employment Assurance Scheme etc. are implemented throughout the country including these areas.

[Translation]

Clearing of Deficits

715. SHRI JAGAT VIR SINGH DRONA: Will the Minister of PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION be pleased to state:

(a) whether the Planning Commission has asked the State Governments for taking measures to abolish the deficit in the State Electricity Boards and the State Transport Corporations in their proposals of Ninth Plan and has also suggested to levy additional taxes and cess to mobilise more resources; and

(b) if so, the details thereof, State-wise ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF PLANNING AND PROGRAMME IMPLEMENTATION AND MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI YOGINDER K. ALAGH): (a) and (b) Yes Sir. In the context of formulation of Ninth Five Year Plan, Planning Commission has suggested to the States that in order to improve the working of State Level Enterprises, concrete proposals may be framed so that they do not constitute a drain on the budgetary resources of the Governments and may be able to contribute for their respective State's Plans. The Commission has also mentioned that the States should raise their resources by enhancing tax rates containing Non-Plan Revenue Expenditure and improving Non-Tax Revenues.

[English]

Exploration of Oil Wealth By PSU's

716. SHRI SANDIPAN THORAT: Will the PRIME MINISTER be pleased to state:

(a) whether the attention of the Government has been drawn to the news-item captioned "Five Oil PSU's plan foray into Kazakhstan appearing in "Financial Express" dated February 4, 1997;

(b) if so, the reaction of the Government thereto; and

(c) the present status of the proposal and implications thereof ?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF PETROLEUM AND NATURAL GAS (SHRI T.R. BAALU): (a) Yes, Sir.

(b) and (c) The Empowered Committee has approved the proposal of OVL for negotiating the terms and conditions for the project with Kazakhstan authorities, without any commitment at this stage. However, there is no response from Kazakhstan authorities so far on ONGC Videsh Ltd's (OVL) application for exploration licence for 18 blocks covering 20,000 sq. km. OVL has invited OIL, IOC, HPCL and GAIL to participate in the project.

RGDWM

717. SHRI K.P. SINGH DEO: Will the Minister of RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the name of the States where Rajiv Gandhi Drinking Water Mission has been launched;

(b) the achievements made under the Programme in those States so far;

(c) whether any other Accelerated Water Scheme has been launched in the rural areas of any of these States during the Eighth Plan;

(d) if so, the achievements made under those programmes in those States so far; State-wise; and

(e) the target date fixed by the Government to ensure the supply of potable drinking water?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF RURAL AREAS AND EMPLOYMENT (SHRI CHANDRADEO PRASAD VARMA): (a) The Rajiv Gandhi National Drinking Water Mission Programme is being implemented in all the States/UTs.

(b) The State-wise achievements in terms of coverage of rural habitations with safe drinking water facilities are at Statement enclosed.

(c) No, Sir.

(d) Does not arise.